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FOR ACTION

PROPOSAL FOR A UNICEF MISSION STATEMENT

SUMMARY

In response to Executive Board decision 1995/7 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), adopted at the first regular session of 1995, and following extensive consultations with members of the Executive Board, UNICEF partners and staff on the mission of the organization, the Executive Director proposes the text contained in the present document, entitled "The Mission of UNICEF", for the approval of the Executive Board.

* E/ICEF/1996/2.

Background

1. At its first regular session in January 1995, in considering the management study on UNICEF prepared by Booz•Allen and Hamilton, the Executive Board in its decision 1995/7 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1) requested the secretariat, inter alia, to draft an overall mission statement for UNICEF and to submit a text to the Executive Board for consideration.

2. In its subsequent decision 1995/12 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), adopted at its second regular session in March 1995, the Executive Board decided to consider the question of the UNICEF mission, including emergencies, at its 1995 annual session. At the request of the Bureau of the Executive Board, the secretariat prepared a report entitled "Management review: issues concerning the UNICEF mission" (E/ICEF/1995/AB/L.11) to facilitate the discussion.

3. That background document presented a historical perspective on the evolution of the UNICEF mandate, summarized those aspects of the mission on which there is already broad consensus and identified those issues needing further discussion with the Executive Board, UNICEF partners and UNICEF staff.

4. The Executive Board agreed that the mission statement should be concise and that its preparation should involve a broad consultative process. It should be forward looking and identify what sets UNICEF apart from other organizations. It should be neither detailed nor technical, and should be accessible to the public.

5. It was understood that a mission statement would not replace the mandate of UNICEF, which is constituted by resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Executive Board. However, the process of developing a mission statement for UNICEF provided a welcome opportunity for the Executive Board, UNICEF partners and allies and UNICEF staff to review the priorities and strategies of the organization in light of changing global circumstances, the new challenges facing children at the close of the twentieth century, and the almost universally ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child and other global agreements applicable to children and women.

6. Following an intense period of consultation with national partners in several countries, all levels of UNICEF staff working at headquarters and in field offices, National Committees for UNICEF and members of the Executive Board, the secretariat believes that the proposed text of the UNICEF mission statement describes the UNICEF purpose and captures the essence of the many valuable contributions the secretariat has received, while maintaining brevity and simplicity.

7. The question of the UNICEF role in emergencies is dealt with in detail in document E/ICEF/1996/4, which also contains a statement of the UNICEF mission in emergencies.

8. The Executive Director acknowledges the spirit of collaboration that has characterized this process of developing a UNICEF mission statement and wishes to thank the members and observers of the Executive Board, National Committees,

national partners and the staff of UNICEF for all their individual and collective contributions.

Recommendation

9. The Executive Director recommends the following text to the Executive Board as the UNICEF mission statement.

THE MISSION OF UNICEF

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.

UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children.

UNICEF insists that the survival, protection and development of children are universal development imperatives that are integral to human progress.

UNICEF mobilizes political will and material resources to help countries, particularly developing countries, ensure a "first call for children" and to build their capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services for children and their families.

UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children - victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation and those with disabilities.

UNICEF responds in emergencies to protect the rights of children. In coordination with United Nations partners and humanitarian agencies, UNICEF makes its unique facilities for rapid response available to its partners to relieve the suffering of children and those who provide their care.

UNICEF is non-partisan and its cooperation is free of discrimination. In everything it does, the most disadvantaged children and the countries in greatest need have priority.

UNICEF aims, through its country programmes, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities.

UNICEF works with all its partners towards the attainment of the sustainable human development goals adopted by the world community and the realization of the vision of peace and social progress enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.